

Purdy Quits State Police, Scranton to Court-Martial 2

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HARRISBURG, April 8.—Col. E. Wilson Purdy resigned Friday as commissioner of the Pennsylvania State Police, charging in a bitter seven-page letter that he has been the victim of a "vicious . . . politically inspired . . . ruthless and completely irresponsible"

attack which came to a head with allegations of illegal wire-tapping by troopers.

In a strong statement, Gov. William W. Scranton accepted the resignation, appointed Major Paul A. Rittelmann as acting commissioner and announced he would order the court-martial of Detective Angelo Carcaci and Major W. J. Stanton.

STANTON RELIEVED

Carcaci admitted before a legislative investigating committee that he tapped telephones under Stanton's orders and with equipment purchased

*Pictures, Rittelmann Profile,
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fraudulently through the use of the police "informers' fund."

Stanton, then commander of the Detective Division, took the 5th Amendment 77 times and was relieved of his command.

"Make no mistake—this is a sad day for law enforcement in Pennsylvania," Scranton said in a statement equally as bitter as that of the commissioner, who came here from St. Petersburg, Fla., at the start of this administration in Jan., 1963.

'WORST POLITICS'

"The worst kind of politics has won a battle for the lawless element in our society," the Governor said. "But they have not won the war.

"I want it thoroughly understood that, despite the apparent desires of others, so long as I am Governor, I shall oppose with all my power any effort to reinject the influence of politics

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Purdy Resigns In State Police Wiretap Probe

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and politicians into the State Police organization.

The Governor received Purdy's "regretful" resignation in his office, then conferred with Attorney General Walter E. Alessandrini, and wrote his statement.

PAYS \$25,000

Alessandrini said Rittelmann would be promoted to lieutenant colonel in the State Police. The commissioner customarily is a colonel. The next man to hold the job will be paid \$25,000 a year under a new Cabinet salary scale.

Purdy's salary was \$20,000. If Rittelmann remains as acting commissioner, he will receive the top pay after 30 days.

Rittelmann was jumped over two others who outranked him—Deputy Commissioner Frank McKetta and Chief of Staff John I. Grosnik.

Both men are lieutenant colonels. Grosnik has been free of allegations regarding the wiretapping charges, but McKetta figured in testimony. Carcaci said he compiled an inventory of "bugs" and gave copies to Stanton and McKetta.

2285-MAN FORCE

Purdy, who has been a bone of contention in the Cabinet since his appointment the night before Scranton's inauguration, really was placed on the griddle with the creation of a Wemo-cratic-controlled House committee to investigate the Administration of the 2285-man force under his command.

The question of manpower—one of the points covered in the resolution approving the committee—had not even been reached when Carcaci appeared before the group on Washington's Birthday in response to a summons served on him at 3 o'clock that morning at his South Philadelphia home.

DISMISSAL POSSIBLE

He swore to tell the truth as he "shall answer to God on that last great day" and then talked himself into what now is a court-martial, what could be dismissal from the force and what eventually could develop into



UPI Telephoto

MAJ. P. A. RITTELMANN



E. WILSON PURDY

criminal charges.

His leading interrogator was Rep. Herbert Fineman (D., Phila.), majority whip of the House and a recent appointee to the committee which consists of six Democrats and four Republicans. The chairman is Rep. Ronald G. Lench (D., Beaver).

LIKE PULLING TEETH

Though it was like pulling teeth, this was the information given to the committee by Carcaci, a plainclothesman assigned to regimental headquarters for "major criminal confidential investigations."

—On several occasions he (Carcaci) tapped telephones under Stanton's orders and with the knowledge of the major, then his commanding officer.

—The wiretap equipment—possession of which is proper but the use of which is illegal under the law sponsored in 1957 by Fineman—was bought with money from the "confidential fund" a nest-egg held by police organizations everywhere for buying information from underground sources.

Stanton was called before the committee and answered only one question—he gave his name and home address. To all others, he took the Fifth Amendment.

VAGUE ANSWERS

Purdy told the committee he had investigated the charges by Carcaci, but appeared to be somewhat vague in his replies. Shortly thereafter, the Governor blew the whistle on the whole thing by issuing an order

ploye, including all 2285 troopers.

In his statement Friday Purdy did not deny the charges by Carcaci that the police themselves violated a State law. Indeed, he said he assumed the statements were true, and told the Governor:

"I feel certain that if there was an incident or incidents of wiretapping, and I must assume this in view of the statements made by Detective Carcaci, these activities were conducted by very few, if more than one, over-zealous State policemen, and then only in their desire or attempt to combat and stamp out organized crime in this great Commonwealth.

'GRATEFUL TO HIM'

The tribute to Purdy issued by Scranton said:

"He has assiduously followed my instructions concerning the elimination of politics and political influence. For this and for many other reasons, the people of Pennsylvania should be very grateful to him."

In his lengthy resignation, Purdy attacked Fineman personally, declaring that the Philadelphia lawmaker has ulterior motives since he is attorney for a State policeman who has been convicted by court-martial of a charge unrelated to wiretapping. That conviction now is being appealed to the courts.

'NOT GUILTY'

Purdy reviewed his achievements as commissioner, and told Scranton with regard to the wiretapping:

"I want to reassure you, as I have in the past, with all the honesty and sincerity at my command, that I have not been guilty of any wrong-doing, either morally or legally, and more specifically, I assure you that I have not ordered, directed or had knowledge of any alleged wiretapping by any member or members of the Pennsylvania State Police.

"Had I had any knowledge of such activity, I would have ordered it stopped immediately."